

Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

VOLUME XXIV.

ASHLAND, O., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12 1902

No. 7.

Editorial

Hysterical Rainsford

The New York clergyman who champions the Sunday saloon could not possibly be more anxious or zealous if his effort was to establish the kingdom of heaven. He says that no matter how big a majority might be rolled up against Sunday opening, the saloon could not and should not, mark you, *should* not, be closed on Sunday. Heretofore we have heard that the impossibility of enforcing Sunday closing was the argument for Sunday saloons, but now a messenger of Jesus Christ (?) proclaims that the saloon *should* not be closed on Sunday. Just think of this unspeakable blasphemy, this horrible prostitution of a sacred office, this insult to the name of Jesus, when men like Rainsford, puffed into an exaggerated self-importance by the obsequious flatteries which have been smeared upon him, lend pen and voice and influence and partisan zeal to the service of a vast and unfathomable iniquity. He says you can't make men good by law. That argument is nothing more nor less than the sophistry which hides wickedness. The office of law is to *restrain evil*, and to protect society, to protect decent people, and helpless people, the women and children for instance, from the lawless and vicious. Supposing that the law against Sunday saloons is violated, and that clandestine selling is carried on in dark corners, must the law be repealed for that reason? If so, then let us repeal the law against stealing so that thieves may do their stealing in broad day light, open and aboveboard, and not go about it in a sneaking way like they have to do now. Same in regard to murder. It is a shame that a man must crouch, and sneak, and hide behind the darkness, and shoot from ambush, in order to commit murder safely. Since the laws against murder do not prevent murder, repeal them of course, so that you can murder in broad day light like a man. But why not go a step further and license murder and stealing, and make them lawful? A high revenue could be provided in this way, enough doubtless to run the government, all taxes could be done away with, and we would have the very loveliest time that ever was. Let us vote on this proposition, repeal the laws against these crimes, because, don't you see, these laws don't make anybody good; and after the said laws are repealed, let us then vote to *license* murder and stealing. Of course we respectable church people who do the voting would not at all be responsible before God for the wickedness of the thing. Only those who did the murder and stealing would be responsible, and we nice church members who did the voting would be as innocent as the angels. Then again since we would

soon find that the *Sunday* law against stealing and murder on *that day* was also violated, and didn't make anybody good, we would vote to repeal that, too, and if anybody, hysterical women and the like, should oppose us, we would tell everybody that they were serving satan.

Is it possible that any sane man can fail to see that this line of argument is not simply the veriest rot, but that it is also the veriest wickedness? Supposing that the Sunday saloons can not be closed by the police, that they successfully defy all the powers of the government, a proposition which we deny, and which is emphatically denied by thousands of better and wiser men in New York than either Rainsford or Potter; which is better: To *sanction* the iniquity, to approve it, or to maintain against it a solid front of uncompromising virtue, expressed in public sentiment and in law? The men who champion the Sunday saloon on the ground that law against Sunday opening can not be enforced simply proclaim that the saloon is an outlaw in human society, that the saloon element is a lawless element, that it defies law and order and everything decent.

The last sentence in Rainsford's harangue is a "beauty," if we may be allowed the expression. He says: "You can't make a man give up a bad saloon without giving him a good one." In the first place, this is not true, as the so-called preacher must have known when he said it. But we would like to ask what kind of a saloon is better than a bad one? Is it the saloon that sells liquor on Sunday, and where on that holy day vile oaths, filthy stories, unspeakable sensuality and bestiality reign unchallenged and unchecked? As everybody knows who knows anything, this is the character of saloon society, whether on week day or Sunday, and the minister of the gospel who gives countenance to this sort of thing is a thinly disguised messenger of satan.

Church Fairs and Gambling

The daily press reports an event in Washington church society which carries with it a very practical and timely lesson. The event was born of a church fair, or what, in this particular case, amounts to the same thing, a gambling match, and is decidedly unique in that we have never heard of anything just like it before. Progressive euchre at fifty cents for each player, in aid of church and charitable objects, amounts to a rage this season in Washington society. On Christmas eve a euchre game was advertised to be given in a suburban church hall. Turkeys were to have been the prizes. Fifty cents was the entry fee. The entertainment was to have been given under the direction of the sister of the pastor, and presumably with the aid and the consent of the pastor. A police sergeant informed her an hour before play was to have been begun that in the eyes of the police